**Decline in export of tea**

*120. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been sharp decline in the export of tea during 1999-2000 as compared to earlier years;

(b) if so, the total exports of tea, in terms of value and quantity, during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the reasons for the drop in exports, if identified; and

(d) the steps proposed to boost exports in the coming years?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Yes *Sir*. Exports of tea during 1999-2000 have declined by 16.95 mn.kgs as compared to the exports during the previous year. Exports of tea from India in terms of quantity and value during the last three years are as follows:—

| Year | Quantity (in Mn. kgs) | Export (in Rs. Crores) |
|---|---|---|
| 1997-98 | 211.26 | 2003.15 |
| 1998-99* | 205.86 | 2191.84 |
| 1999-2000* | 188.91* | 1796.36* |

*estimated (source: Tea Board)

(c) The Drop in export has been mainly due to decline in production of tea in India especially the orthodox variety; and lower demand from importing countries such as UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, UAE, Kazakhstan etc due to stiff international competition from other tea producing countries like Sri Lanka, Kenya, Indonesia, China etc.

(d) A number of steps have been taken by the Govt/Tea Board to boost export of tea in order in increase consumer awareness of speciality of Indian teas participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad; media compaigns and exchange of tea delegations between India and tea importing countries are undertaken.

The Tea Board is also targeting countries that are large importers of tea and raying special attention to the Countries where exports have declined. Qiiiiliv upgradation is also a vital element in the export promotion efforts.